

# **Denying Yoga Its Roots**

## **(Classic Case of Hinduphobia)**



**Author : Sri Louise**



A classic example of Hinduphobia is the reluctance of many in the west to give the origins and cultivation of Yoga to the Hindus.

“Admiration of a foreign culture or a foreign aesthetic system can connote broad-mindedness and at the same time flatter the aesthetic or political pretensions of the connoisseur. The regard for difference can also become another way to control what has been determined to fall into the category marked “foreign:” certainly this can be its effect on the ground, especially when people are stripped of their art and ceremonial objects so that Western admirers can look at them conveniently located in Museums.

In this way appreciation a la Gautier becomes no more than another manifestation of the colonial mentality. It can operate as an alibi for various forms of colonial

encroachment and can serve as an attempt to domesticate and bring under control difference not only with respect to bodies but also in terms of aesthetic codes and conventions. More important, it can presuppose the right to decide what is valuable and interesting. What this comes down to is the assumption that the colonist possesses the master code within which all data, all people and customs, all art objects, can be assimilated and judged.

In this way of thinking it is the colonist – or the museum expert, the anthropologist, the judge at the land claims court – who will decide what is authentic and, by extension, what is worth paying attention to, saving, or stealing. The world exists as a warehouse of treasure, with the plunder of choice this time more aesthetic than explicitly material. The aestheticized appreciation of difference can elide the extent to which the possibility of

this appreciation continues to be based on ugly and unequal power relations. It still comes down to a question of who takes and who gives.”

Cannibal Culture – Art, Appropriation, & the Commodification of Difference by Deborah Root

## Introduction



I recently found myself at the center of a What Makes This Yoga conversation in a Facebook group for “Yoga and Movement enthusiasts.” This was not the first time as a white woman I have been singled out by

other white women and socially isolated for calling out racism in the group, but the ever increasing white fragility of Yoga people in the US and Canada made this conversation particularly interesting as a cultural case study. The thread was deleted by Diane Bruni, the admin of the group and later dismissed by her as, “Good entertainment, but that’s about it.”

A conversation, which took place over two days, with multiple participants on the topic of cultural appropriation in Yoga is deleted because its worth, for the community, is only in its entertainment factor? I would have kept it simply for its entertainment value, but more importantly as a record of how whites in Yoga approach, define, and obscure the identity and meaning of Yoga from its own standpoint and how hostile they become when confronted with this issue.

White women feel totally entitled to speak on Yoga's behalf even when they themselves admit to never having studied any of the texts that govern Yoga, describe the methods for self-realization, it's ontological significance and the cultural relevance of Yoga within Hinduism or Sanatana Dharma.

Diane Bruni started the group as a way to dissent from Yoga. An Indian in the group asked why dissent was part of the description. Diane uses the word Yoga to mean Asana. She opened the first Asthanga Yoga studio in Toronto and after many years of repetitive practice suffered an extreme injury, tearing a gluteal muscle from the bone. This injury, as well as other health issues, led her to investigate many different modes of moving and healing. Her process is now to bring that information back into the field of Yoga. The Yoga and Movement

Research community shares information about a host of body related topics. All are based upon Western science.

I am also a dancer and like Diane, am inspired by Axis Syllabus. My asana practice has always been influenced by movement ideas found in dance and somatic practices such as Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, Body Mind Centering and Trager. I am not part of an institutionalized style of Asana and therefore, have always enjoyed the freedom to design my own practice and to include other movement modality concepts, some which I integrate into my Asana practice and others that I do not.

In recent years there has been a lot of dialogue in the Yoga community about Asana and Asana related injuries. I am not opposed to these conversations and think in



a culture that has made Yoga synonymous with Asana and turned Asana into the workout method of the new millennium, obviously these conversations are increasingly critical, not just to our understanding of functional movement, but also to our understanding of the danger of cultural appropriation and the psycho/physical ramifications of misappropriation. Additionally, I'm concerned that many of these conversations fixate on the body and do not situate Asana in the larger framework of Yoga and when pressed, are actually deeply antagonistic to Yoga and especially to Hinduism.

Hatha Yoga is based in Eastern science. What happens when the West digests this practice and re-imagines it from its own scientific or fitness perspective. Does it promote a Western bias? Does it replay the colonial trope of everything that has value is

Western in nature? That anything that is Eastern, i.e. Hindu, needs to be “fixed” or “evolved” out of its backwardness by the colonial class?

There is so much to unpack in Diane’s description of the group, which is pictured below, especially when you experience the low level tolerance of Yoga politics by Diane and others in the group. (Note: the new rules that govern this group do not allow for politics of any kind to be posted, Because I assume I’m Going To Retain All My Privileges Forever.)

#### DESCRIPTION

This group is for anyone interested in being part of the cross discipline exchange taking place between Yoga and Movement enthusiasts. One by one we are grappling with the tough question 'What is Yoga?' Can the evolution of Yoga continue to evolve to include science and the teachings from other disciplines? If you believe that Yoga is a living tradition, then you too can play your part in the revolution! This group will share information about bio mechanics, yoga politics, research on the science of movement and any other interesting information about the living matrix. We are the Yoga Dissidents!

When Diane asks, what is Yoga, she is asking what is Asana from an anatomical perspective. She is not trying to restore Asana or even to understand its role as a conduit for Eastern esoterics. It's not even a balanced approach. There are no articles about the relationship of Asana to the whole, what is actually Yoga or discussions about how the West has misappropriated Asana to such a degree that practitioners are ripping their muscles from bone. There is little mention of the western psyche, how and what it projects about itself onto Yoga.

Instead, the critique centers on Asana completely dislocated from its cultural roots, except for when Westerners don't want to assume responsibility for their own Yoga shitshow and then they love to recognize its Indian roots in terms of Blame-the-Hindu.

White scholars have promoted the idea that Asana as the West knows it, is a modern construction or rather a fabrication of western influences that cannot be attributed to any religious continuity spanning 10,000 years on the Indian Subcontinent. The fallout of this perspective is the wide spread isolation of Asana from the theories and religious culture that govern it.

This has allowed the rise of Christian Yoga, faux teachers like Matthew Remski to teach Hindu sacred texts such as the Bhagavad Gita, even though his writings, especially

with regards to the Gita are routinely anti-Hindu and Diane to start a group for “Discussion or questions related to Yoga Asana and other movement based modalities and their related fields. Examples include: Axis Syllabus, Pilates, weight and cross-training, calisthenics/ bodyweight exercise, anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, biomechanics and injury prevention,” which situates asana among fitness/therapy pursuits as if it is a one dimensional corporeal practice belonging to western science.

Yoga is an unbroken tradition, which means it has been in existence and carefully cultivated in India since time immemorial.

Diane Bruni has no connection to that tradition and is deeply inimical towards it as her posts at the end of this conversation reveal. I’m not sure what she means “if you believe Yoga is a living tradition”...or why she thinks Westerners are in a position to

carry a tradition they have no relationship to forward?

When Diane asks if you think Yoga is living, she asks this not to embrace Yoga's historical identity or it's ancestral relevance, which are all part of the existence/tradition of Yoga, rather she is negating any fixed notions of Asana in the West, but linear fixation is part and parcel of western psycho-cosmology. There is nothing more linear than how we tell time, embodied or otherwise. Any non-linear approach to temporality that the West "stumbles" upon has been in Vedic cultural parlance already for thousands of years, even before Christ. The Vedic or Hindu Dharmic outlook, is inherently inclusive, fluid and cyclical and I'm surprised Diane doesn't want to include it in her quest for somatic-self understanding.

I have said that I think there are many ways in which the West can contribute to the practice of Yoga, bio-mechanics is one of them, trauma sensitivity is another, but that would mean Western Yoga included an understanding of the nature of reality and these practices were oriented toward that directional goal, then we could say we were fostering a mutual understanding of Yoga. For those who are not interested in using Asana in this way, I suggest they stop calling what they're doing Yoga. To call what you do Yoga without understanding or even being interested in the cosmology or ontology of Dharmic traditions is not Yoga. It's that simple.

I even offer up new names like Fitness Asana or Bio-Asana and in your class description you could say, I have extracted Asana from the larger framework of Hinduism, to just focus on the body. I

promise to play my singing bowl and every now and then I'll use my special voice to share a few, feel-good slogans I picked up from the many spiritual paperbacks I have read along the way. P.S. Don't worry, nothing about this is religious, which is code for saying, relax, I have taken the Hindu out of Yoga.

Now this makes a lot of people in the West really mad as this thread reveals. Many people have spent decades doing downward dog to the count of 5 and feel they have invested a lot in the propagation of Yoga in North America...but as you will see through the comments, Yoga is no where in sight. Instead, new age approaches to body and empowerment have given people a career with a soap-box for how to be spiritual when you have no idea who you are. It's shocking how little most Western Yoga teachers actually know about Yoga.



Some of the antagonism is their own unacknowledged conflict to their religion of origin, which is often projected onto Hinduism, first positively and then negatively. It's part of the "individuation" process of westerners in Yoga and the tenacious sense of ownership they derive post-individuation process. What's happening in the West is not a struggle for Yoga, most people have no idea what Yoga is and really don't care, it's a struggle for capital. Think The Secret for spiritual narcissists, who have no analysis of capitalism.

Diane Bruni is very critical of Pattabhi Jois and the Astanga method, but is willing to up-hold Danny Paradise, a white male Astanga teacher, because he lets her off the Yoga hook...by the way, S.L. is code for Sri Louise!



**Diane Bruni**

Thanks for all your comments. I spent the day today with a great old friend, **Danny Paradise**. he has been doing Ashtanga Yoga for 40 years! He was the first Canadian to learn the form from David Williams. Danny was telling the class today that the roots of yoga go back to Egypt, he even teaches some Egyptian yoga poses, poses we've all see before. I was telling him about the cultural appropriation of yoga conversation we have been having in this group, and he reminded me that the Hindu's appropriated yoga from the shamans. Thank God S.L. is no longer a member of this group, a statement like that could send her over the deep edge.

I don't know, I feel like this is Diane Bruni having a Meryl Streep [moment](#)...Understanding the demographics of most Yoga classes, it is safe to assume that Danny's classes are mostly white women, who probably have a lot of anti-blackness steeped into their whiteness, but suddenly, Kemetic Yoga is white ladies' Yoga Du Jour.

If you accept the Out of Africa migration theory, and there is a debate over migration dates from Africa to India, 75,000 or 50,000 ago, then we can say, “we” share a genetic history, but especially for those of us who are white, I think we should be careful in our quest to homogenize everything, so that we don’t have to negotiate difference on every other social/economic/geo-political level.

It’s also important to note that migration and what migrating people take them with about their spiritual identity is a totally different dynamic than what we are referring to as cultural appropriation by Euro-Americans...I also think it is safe to say, that what we practice and understand about Yoga is based in an understanding of Self that can be traced to the Rishis and is still extant in Vedic scripture and taught today within a Hindu framework, not as some kind of watered down appropriation, but rather as

the fulfillment of complete self-mastery, maintained and passed on for generations through the Guru/Sishya, teacher/student relationship.

Diane's statement on the roots of Yoga can only be contextualized by reading the entire thread because what it reveals is something more sinister and that is the depths Diane is willing to go to not give Yoga to the Hindus...I don't know why she and others are so reluctant to give the origins and cultivation of Yoga civilization on the Indian subcontinent to the Hindus...I can only attribute this to Hinduphobia.

It is not without the least bit of irony that while we were having this conversation in the Yoga & Movement Research Community, which is a Canadian based platform, that a formal apology to the Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus of the Komagata Maru,

a Japanese steamship carrying 370 Indian emigrants, who were not allowed to disembark in Van Couver, was being pronounced by Prime Minister Trudeau.

The apology was in recognition of the racism at play 100 years ago. “The move was widely acknowledged to be aimed at keeping Indians out of Canada. Then premier of British Columbia, Sir Richard McBride, said at the time, ‘And we always have in mind the necessity of keeping this a white man’s country.’” It’s not that Hinudphobia is new, it’s just that it has not been articulated in the Yoga community until now.

In other “anti-Indian news,” The Navaho nation recently brought a civil suit against the retailer Urban Outfitters, who launched the “Navaho” hipster panty and the particularly offensive, “Navaho” print,

fabric wrapped flask. In court documents, the retail giant said, “The term “Navaho” is a generic term for a style or design, but “Diné [Navaho] tribal member Casey John disagrees with the argument “Navajo” is a generic term. Using Navaho to describe something is further colonizing the word.” Remaking something culturally specific into something generic for mass consumption, is an essential component of the coercive tactics of cultural appropriation for profit.



Rajiv Malhotra’s U-Turn theory is a template for how the culturally specific, becomes universally unspecific, before again becoming specific as the “digested”

innovation of a more dominant culture. The U-Turn theory explores the various dynamics in which westerners often “reject” their own culture and religion of origin in order to embrace the East, but eventually find themselves in conflict over how much Indianness can actually be tolerated by the Western psyche and eventually turn around.

The u-turn is marked by a reverse rejection, now of the East, but not before a considerable amount of Indian knowledge has been assimilated into western thought, posing as western discovery. Malhotra initially developed his theory based upon the rampant intellectual assimilation of Eastern ideas he observed among western academics, but his theory describes the current trend in North American Yoga with uncanny accuracy.

The U-Turn theory illustrates how the non-Indian goes from devotional and serious, often following a Guru, traveling to India and otherwise indulging in Hinduness, especially as a fashion statement, (*because when you want to perform spiritual in the West, the costume combo of choice is the Kurta and Mala. What is the origin of prayer beads? I invite Diane to do her own research*). Later, the same non-Indian will engage in distancing and neutralizing the Hinduness and then ostracizing the very thing they previously emulated, Hinduness, especially with attacks against others who have not taken a U-Turn.





Anyone who remains and esteems Vedic heritage as being central to one's understanding of Yoga, is immediately condemned as a right wing Hindu ideologue. This is how Hinduphobia works, by conflating identity and "religious" orientation with political fanaticism and violence. The resulting consequence is that Yoga, which was previously Hindu, is now a generic commodity belonging the West. If

there is no cultural root, there can be no cultural appropriation... You can easily see whose interest this line of reasoning caters to.

In the last few years we have seen countless conversations on social media as to what the word Yoga means and to what practices/understandings the term should be applied. Rage Yoga, Yoga on Tap, Yogaritas, Ganja Yoga, YogaFit are just some of the many ways that the West has capitalized on the generics of Yoga, but this obfuscation of Indigenous wisdom and co-optation into mainstream economics has a long history in North America.

Dr. Dawn Martin-hill, a Mohawk from the Wolf Clan, holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology and is one of the original founders of the Indigenous Studies Program at McMaster University, in

Hamilton/Ontario, Canada. In 2013 she gave a Ted Talk titled, Indigenous Knowledge, the White Man's Indian: Mythology Ignores our Contributions to the World. What she describes is identical to Malhortra's U-Turn theory.

*“Our ideas and our thinking come from our spirituality, that is the basis, of how we know who we are and our identity and our sovereignty comes from the Creator. It's an inherent right that we have. This is in direct contrast to European representation, their myth of the Indian. They were appropriating our knowledges, they were appropriating our medicines, our land, they were colonizing all the things that we had contributed to their survival in the Americas, but they never gave any credit to the people who gave them that knowledge and that was indigenous people. Everything from irrigation, to foods to political thought,*

*we have shaped the psyche and the ideas of the West and that's what you won't, I'm sure you haven't learned at any level of education."*

In her presentation, Dr. Dawn Martin-Hill mentions a ground breaking book by Robert Berkhofer titled the White Man's Indian. "In the western formula lawlessness and savagery must recede before the vanguard of white society, of which the town and particularly the educated White woman are the prime symbols" (p.97)

At some point we will have a book called the White Man's Yoga in which educated, white women will play a prominent role in the subjugation and erasure of Hindu contributions to the conception and cultivation of Yoga as a Moksa Sadhana, mainly through dismissing Indigenous voices, especially the Guru, a particularly

Indian convention for self-knowledge and those white peers who have studied within Indigenous, traditional frameworks.

And how are they dismissed? Through attacks suggesting that those who uphold the scriptures of Hinduism as being authoritative on the subject, i.e., how one deciphers the definition, meaning and goal of Yoga, as promoting Hindu nationalism and upholding right wing Hindutva agendas, but this can only be done if you are willing to conflate Hinduism with factional hostility. When I described this willingness as Hinduphobic, I was promptly removed from the group.

One of the other group members, Amara Miller, wrote a blog post to address the privilege white women possess in the pursuit of Asana and to remind us, “we have to recognize that what we are doing isn’t just

“fun,” or “safer,” it is also political.” Amara received both praise and condemnation for drawing attention to the group’s agenda. “We are trying to change the practice, and anytime we do this, especially when we are coming from places of privilege (which most of us in this group are, #noshadejusttruth) we are in danger of engaging in cultural appropriation”



**Allise Rhode** Are you now making things 'simple' Amara??? Really if all this hearing of each other is so important to the "Research", then LISTEN. It's not simple, as you have been screaming. It takes 'years' to 'get it'. Right. So, you are essentially undercutting your 'argument'. Don't want to listen to me? Too damn Bad. I HAVE A VOICE. TOO. What I see is people like Sri Louise, essentially being 'tools' of the Hindutva agenda. MALE PRIVILEGED. She is running around shaming, (a white woman, or at least so pale as to 'pass') ...shaming women. For trying to have physical and mental power..... As far as I can see, she is the enabler of the powerful. Demanding that yoga be a religious buy-in of Brahmins!!!!

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 3 hrs

Allise Rhode remains in the group, even though her behavior and tone are deeply Hinduphobic. Why does Diane Bruni coddle her racist behavior? Because it upholds the

white women hegemony of the group. If Diane makes me out to be a “bully,” who hijacked a thread, then she only needs to get rid of me, the collateral damage of white deflection, but she’ll keep the erratic Hinduphobe because it serves her fragility to think “I am out to get her,” and not that she herself is participating in Hinduphobia.

None of my comments were as defensive as Kathryn Beet or Allise Rhode, which you will see in the text and screen shots that follow. (note; the new house rules don’t allow for racism, but Allise is still in the group and to the best of my knowledge has not been reprimanded for her Hinduphobia by anyone in the group). I’m pretty sure when Diane means racism, she’s talking about me calling the white ladies YogaBeckies...



Diane Bruni

Whoa. This is for more than i bargained for when i started this group. This is an important topic, but it's not my main area of interest. This may seem shallow, that's ok with me. To be honest I had no idea it was such a big deal. I have never encountered it before in my white privileged life. I am very interested in learning more, and appreciate the energy that goes into these comments, but I will draw the line. I will not tolerate being called names. When someone treats me with such disregard insults me and my friends. I walk away. I have received numerous messages from other people who have been harassed by this person and her posse. I will not 'be nice' and participate in that type of dialogue. She is known for attacking people. In fact a good friend of mine who knows her from the movement world, warned me a few weeks ago that she 'was out to get me'. So should I be afraid? No I should just block her. Sorry if this offends some people. People can leave the group at any time, and start new groups and converse on the subjects that interest them I want this group to shift direction, there has been far too much emphasis on politics for my liking. I want people to share helpful information about movement, that

What becomes more important for whites experiencing racial discomfort is to ‘scandalize the defense’ of the those who wage it, meaning, anyone who confronts the dominion of the white Yoga world will be silenced and vilified by various methods, otherwise known as scapegoating...because it is critical to the economic and social hegemony of Yoga in North America to maintain the white-washing of Yoga for its own neocolonial purposes.



What follows is a rather perfect example of this dynamic, which I refer to as YogaBecky. Becky, a term borrowed from Black Culture and Yoga fragility, a phrase based in and adopted from Robin DiAngelo's White Fragility, which she expands upon in her book, What Does It Mean To Be White: Developing White Racial Literacy

I present to you the thread, almost in its entirety, for the purpose of telling history as it actually happens...because we all know how whites tell history, when they don't just re-write it, they simply delete it.

# Act I



**Diane Bruni**

May 17 at 9:20pm

Hi Group, Twenty 22 of us got together in person tonight in Toronto. All women [Judith Mintz](#).

Let me tell you about time together. We all had name tags, really? Yup! name tags. We started in a circle a very tight circle we were standing arm to arm pressing into each other and growing taller. Then we opened the circle up and I stood in the middle guiding the group through movements, on the spot, no mat. Like Tai Chi, like Qi Gong, like axis syllabus, like functional fitness, like yoga.

Then we moved the class across space all the same movements now actually moving through the room, from one end to the other. We danced freely to one song, one of my faves, David Bowie's Lets Dance. We sang a bit of one song together ' let it be'. we laughed, we sweat we shared our **es**pressions. I read lyrics to a song I love called Quiet by Paul Simon we listened to the song for svasana. We ended in another circle, we swayed we giggled we had big smiles from ear to ear. A couple people mentioned the word revolution....

And for the first time in life I had a playlist!

It was a dream come true. Thank you to everyone who came for your support and energy! We've only just begun! If you were there, I'd love to hear your lasting impressions on the experience.

Thanks for coming and all your support [Kathryn Beet](#). You're brave too!

I'm thinking of calling the class YogaMotion...what do you think of the name? Any other ideas?



**Judith Mintz** Would have loved to have been there.

Like · Reply · 1 · May 17 at 9:25pm



**Jessika Marie** i'm still swaying in my cells as i lay in bed - amazing class, amazing women and AMAZING playlist 😊

Like · Reply · 1 · May 17 at 9:29pm



**Sri Louise** what does it have to do with yoga?

Like · Reply · 3 · May 17 at 9:31pm

^ Hide 11 Replies



**Diane Bruni** union

Like · Reply · 2 · May 18 at 7:29am



**Sri Louise** but union is only up until disunion...then what?

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 7:41am



**Diane Bruni** not sure what you mean?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 7:41am



**Sri Louise** besides, i think that is kinda far fetched here diane...

Like · Reply · May 18 at 7:41am



**Sri Louise** anything that comes together in time and space is subject to the laws of time of space...meaning any union, any two or more things coming together will also come apart. so your union, has to constantly be maintained. i think that was the original problem that people had with asana...whatever you gain from it has to be constantly maintained....call it repetitive stress syndrome, or samsara, but it's not yoga...what exactly do you mean by union and why does that constitute yoga?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 7:47am



**Diane Bruni** I guess you had to be there to know, words cannot describe the feeling. Yoga for me is a feeling. Not particular shapes , but all shapes. We are moving away from form and structure into formlessness, every woman there last night expressed a yearning for more freedom of expression. Is yoga about the shape of the poses?

Like · Reply · 6 · May 18 at 7:55am · Edited



**Sri Louise** I would say the conflation of asana with yoga is part of the problem and it is so complete, we almost can't conceive of yoga outside of it. to break out of one form is not formlessness, it's simply replaced with another form, albeit one that you prefer for now... freedom of expression is something more akin to psychology, the need or desire for self-expression...that is not the self of yoga... diane, i have been there, i have been dancing for 44 years, and i don't misconstrue what happens in a dance class with yoga. my dance class does not have a scripture that accompanies it. my dance class is so many things, but it is not a means for knowing a formless self...yoga is something very particular, that we have turned it into anything because we either don't know that or don't care does not make it any less true...

Like · Reply · 4 · May 18 at 8:05am · Edited



**Saraswati Sylvie Boisclair** Thank you for the clarity.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 8:20am



**Diane Bruni** Sri Louise when you teach yoga do you teach scripture or poses?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 8:52am



**Sri Louise** that depends...what scriptures have you studied Diane and with whom?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:30am



**Diane Bruni** Sri Louise I have not studied the scriptures. Your knowledge far surpasses mine in that realm. My daily life is my scripture. my children are my teachers.

Like · Reply · 4 · May 18 at 12:12pm





**Megan Spasevski** Loved the way savasana was framed, with you reading the lyrics and then listening to "Quiet", letting the words sink me like a guided meditation. And the natural flow of elevating vibrations that were not oms at the end. It was an unrushed savasana (the kind I really need and rarely get) and a lovely way to end the evening. Thanks again [Diane](#), can't wait for next week!

Like · Reply · 2 · May 17 at 9:41pm



**Kathryn Beet** Epic!

Like · Reply · May 17 at 9:54pm



**Bernadette June** This sounds as liberating as my Djembe drum experience. Sounds amazing!

Like · Reply · 1 · May 17 at 10:00pm



**Bradd Graves** nia

Like · Reply · 3 · May 17 at 10:00pm



**Jennifer Anderson** My first 'yoga training', 10 years ago. In the state I was in at the time, overwhelmed and desperate for a change, knowing that movement would be a way out, I spent many late nights googling 'yoga + dance = .... What exactly? I took the training in Sedona, and it was exactly what I was looking for. Moving through the elements, exalting music, community. It was developed by an off-shoot of kripalu yogadance and 5 Rhythms. It was a wonderful experience, sadly though, the instructor was unstable. I would love to see more of this movement, it is so accessible to many.

Like · Reply · 3 · May 18 at 5:39am

↪ [Diane Bruni](#) replied · 1 Reply



**Norma Dvorsky** Love 'yogamotion'! Last night was so great!! I enjoyed myself immensely, moving in this free & energized way. Fabulous group spirit, so liberating & safe too. It did occur to me that what we did was still based on & more available to me, through a fairly strong yoga practice. Perfect playlist. I look forward to more!

Like · Reply · 3 · May 18 at 6:14am



**Diane Bruni** Norma, Thanks for joining us, your energy was radiant.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 7:08am



**Helen Oldfield Smith** Did I miss a post about when/where this was being held? It sounds like it was a lot of fun!

Like · Reply · May 18 at 6:20am



Helen Oldfield Smith replied · 2 Replies



**Erica Ross** Sounds wonderful. And reminds me of my own ecstatic dance practice, Dance Our Way Home!!!! Playlist, community, healing, sweat, laughter, relaxation and freedom. I'm happy to hear you're finding your own flow! And love the name YogaMotion.

(Btw: I still offer teacher training once a year if healing movement with a playlist is something any women here want to dive deeper into! I've got 2 spots left.)

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 7:15am · Edited



**Diane Bruni** Thanks Erica, The time you spent at 80 Gladstone gave me a glimpse into another way to move and connect. You were one of many influences, thank you so much.

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 7:11am



Erica Ross replied · 1 Reply



**Jennifer Anderson** Sadly, yogaMotion name is trademarked - <http://www.yogamotion.com/about/yogamotion/>



## YOGAMOTION METHOD - YogaMotion

is a safe and effective form of Hatha Yoga that has been developed by Nancy Ruby over 30 years of practice...

YOGAMOTION.COM

Like · Reply · May 18 at 7:33am



**Diane Bruni** Oh good researching! I don't think I can be bothered with trademarking, I just want to have fun with this, I don't own it. No one owns it. this person is in the US. i doubt she trademarked the name in Canada. But good point, maybe I should find another name, any suggestions? You know Moksha Yoga can't use that name in the USA because there is studio called Moksha In Chicago, funny thing is I mentioned that to the founder of Moksha right at the beginning and blew it off, never thinking that Moksha Yoga would



right at the beginning and blew it off, never thinking that Moksha Yoga would become what it did. So maybe I should think this through a bit...

Like · Reply ·  3 · May 18 at 7:40am · Edited



**Jennie Montford** you probably should Diane....

Like · Reply · May 18 at 8:03am




**Kathryn Beet** Yoga and Movement Research Project.... working name.

Like · Reply ·  2 · May 18 at 8:06am



**Sri Louise** unless someone can say what specifically this has to do with yoga, i would ask that you don't use yoga in the title...just a thought?

Like · Reply ·  3 · May 18 at 8:07am



**Kathryn Beet** It is Yoga. Why are you even questioning that. Define Yoga Sri Louise.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 8:10am · Edited



**Sri Louise** how is it yoga?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 8:11am




**Kathryn Beet** Define Yoga and I will answer your question.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 8:11am



**Kathryn Beet** Sri Louise???

Like · Reply ·  1 · May 18 at 8:17am · Edited



**Sri Louise** and Kathryn, there are 3 classes in which the dhatu, root, yuj, can be conjugated, each will lend a different meaning to the word. yoga has been used in indian culture to mean many things, i'm talking specifically about the word. have you ever looked the word up in a sanskrit dictionary? there are many meanings to the word. so we need to arrive at something more than a one word translation that is used so commonly, but to the best of my knowledge does not appear in any main scripture on the topic. yoga is a moksa sadhana, a means for self-liberation. this self is not to be confused with the body/mind/sense complex, because that confusion is the problem. yoga is the means to remove avidya, self-ignorance. what part of this class is removing the self-ignorance regarding your current conclusions of self, god and the world? what's your definition?

Like · Reply ·  2 · May 18 at 8:23am · Edited



**Sri Louise** Kathryn Beet???

Like · Reply · May 18 at 8:41am



**Kathryn Beet** What parts of the yoga that YOU teach remove the self-ignorance regarding your students current conclusions of self, god and the world? I would like to hear about that... Because if that is your definition, I can assure you that much of the "Yoga" I have been involved in or taken part in has not achieved that goal and I have practiced just about every style of "Yoga" out there. Is your definition of Yoga exemplified by the cover photo on your Facebook page? If so, you are correct.. this was not that. This class was contained in a focused structure that led to a shared transcendence. Everyone was moving together in unison.. no cueing by the teacher... we all moved with her.. as one. It was quiet, meditative, focused, creative, relevant. We exercised our minds and our bodies. Following patterns. When the teacher spoke, it was about idea's that were relevant to our experience. She incorporated soulful music and poetry. We became one early on in the practice and that one changed and morphed throughout. By 1/3 way through the class, ego's dropped away and all sorts of things evolved.. laughter, singing, dancing, sounding, pressing together with an overwhelming sense of ease and relaxation. We left tingling, giggling, with a sense of deep connection to one another and everything. I felt so happy afterwards.. not about anything in particular... just happy. There was communication afterwards between us. This is how we all felt. It was not classical yoga... you are correct about that. It was contemporary, feminist evolutionary yoga. It was relevant to our experience of being human beings who are alive here and now creating a form of Yoga that speaks to the needs of the bodies we live in. It pays no homage to a Guru. It lives, it breaths, here, now and through it, patterns, relationships, connections were formed. It was one big Yog Fest. It was Yoga.

Like · Reply · 14 · May 18 at 9:04am

^ Hide 13 Replies



**Kathryn Beet** " In witnessing the culture of dance incorporate more and more Asana into the framework of either class and/or choreography, Sri created a class to bring greater clarity to the precision of Asana, but also to encourage students to improvise with the vocabulary of Asana in non-structured ways to source one's own kinesthetic vision". Sri Louise, I just pulled this paragraph from your website. What part of this do you not understand? From the paragraph above. it seems to me you are doing something very



similar yourself. I believe you call it the Somatics of Asana. Is it not Yoga?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:10am



**Sri Louise** which is exactly why this year's class has the following description, and it meant to off set the experience you detail above... i'm surprised you didn't see it in exploring my other offerings...

"This workshop will spend the first half hour exploring verses from various Vedic texts, which reveal the non-dual identity of oneself. The next two hours will use Asana, Pranayama and Meditation to physically ruminate on these teachings.

Rooting into traditional Hindu knowledge, we will reduce our fuzzy Yoga notions, our imperial longing for planet bliss and embrace a vision of ourselves and the world we inhabit that is inclusive and subsequently without fear."

Like · Reply · 🍊 2 · May 18 at 9:28am · Edited



**Sri Louise** oh and **Kathryn Beet** from where do you derive your notion of oneness?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:29am



**Asia Nelson** I don't know you, Kathryn, but I want to. 😊

Like · Reply · 🍊 3 · May 18 at 9:30am



**Kathryn Beet** **Sri Louise** From 56 years of being alive in my body. Not from some pontificated, regurgitated bullshit.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:59am · Edited



**Sri Louise** ladies, i can be here with you all day...every post just confirms my stance...

Like · Reply · 🍊 1 · May 18 at 9:40am



**Kathryn Beet** **Sri Louise**, unfortunately, I don't have all day... I'm busy sowing my Yoga seeds on "planet bliss, embracing a vision of myself and the world I inhabit that is inclusive and subsequently without fear." But I'm sure our paths will cross again. It's been a pleasure! Seriously.



**Sri Louise** yes i get what planet you're on...

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:57am



**Kathryn Beet** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggGO4sjfYys>



Yoga Teacher Training for dancers / Sri Louise

YOUTUBE.COM

Like · Reply · May 18 at 11:43am



**Kathryn Beet** Yoga Teacher Training for Dancers Sri Louise?

"unless someone can say what specifically this has to do with yoga, i would ask that you don't use yoga in the title...just a thought"

Like · Reply · May 18 at 11:46am



**Diane Bruni** Asia Nelson any thoughts?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 11:52am



**Asia Nelson** Diane Bruni it's a tough one, right? What we're doing is less about ownership, division, specialization, exclusion - all of which is what titling does. But we've got to call it something to give it a framework and help people understand the promise we're making (which is essentially what 'branding' something does). Right now, what we're doing most closely resembles what we understand as "yoga" so it's the most understandable label. I suspect it will evolve out of that box.

Like · Reply · 👍 4 · May 18 at 8:58pm · Edited



**Diane Bruni** Thanks for sharing Asia. Yes. I believe many of us are all in the same boat right now. What to call it? brand? Trademark it? I'm inclined to just keep flowing with the process and not name it, it already has a name. It's all yoga to me. Once we give it another name then what? We might have to stick to it and not let it evolve...there was an interesting thread about Pilates recently.





**Diane Bruni** The feeling in the last class night was incredibly self liberating, I'm not sure what you refer when you say yoga should not be confused with body-mind sense complex. I thought Yoga was all of those things. together. The problem with defining yoga is that we all have own definition.

Like · Reply · 5 · May 18 at 9:05am



**Asia Nelson** Women have long wasted time trying to defend our experiences and innovations on established traditions. Take Sri Taylor Swift's advice here and "shake it off, shake it off".

Like · Reply · 7 · May 18 at 8:58pm · Edited



**Sri Louise** Asia, i'm gonna shake you off...there i feel much more liberated. Diane, if yoga is the body/mind/sense complex and the body/mind/sense complex is limited, by nature; we can all agree it's going to die, why do you need yoga? what's the point of yoga? what makes it different than psychology?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:39am



**Asia Nelson** Ditto. Yay - YOGA!

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 9:44am



**Kathryn Beet** Hahahaha!

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:44am



**Svea Sauerborn** as a psychology student I'd say that the main thing that sets psychology (=study of behavior and mind) apart from yoga for example is the scientific method

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:53am



@explwhere

This is a picture of my friend Becky. She used to be a happy, popular girl until one night she snorted marijuana at a party. She died instantly. Please, don't do marijuana. It's the most dangerous drug out there. Please don't wind up like Becky.

pretty sure that's Taylor Swift

no its becky



**Sri Louise** science is dealing with what can be objectified. is the subject something one can objectify? psychology is dealing with the components of the body/mind complex, which are objectifiable, knowable through the sense organs. is the self, the subject, an object in creation? or an object of the mind? i'm not talking about the contents of the psyche. i'm talking about the nature of your being. is that objectifiable? if not, then there are wild differences between psychology and yoga. psychology's sphere of influence is not ontology...

Like · Reply · May 18 at 11:02am



**Kathryn Beet** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggGO4sjfYys>



Yoga Teacher Training for dancers / Sri Louise

YOUTUBE.COM

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 11:43am



Write a reply...



**Deborah Whipple** Damn. I totally forgot. 😞

Like · Reply · May 18 at 9:50am



**Deborah Whipple** replied · 5 Replies



**Amy Soska** It sounds like a wonderful class, respect to you and your bold evolution Diane. I also wonder though, why we are still calling it yoga when, as you said, it fuses so many elements - taichi, dance, pop music. Why the attachment to yoga? Is it for marketing purposes or more for personal reasons? I hope my question doesn't provoke angry defensive responses, im just curious. Id love to attend such a class but would be just as (or maybe even more) keen to play in a space that wasnt labelled as yogic.

Unlike · Reply · 7 · May 18 at 9:59am





**Asia Nelson** That's a constant challenge for a lot of teachers who have rooted our practice and teaching in traditional styles of yoga (I find the idea of "traditional yoga" a bit of an oxymoron in some ways, as there are many "traditions" of yoga and surely when those differing traditions emerged, there were similar backlashes from origin-addicts demanding that things stay the same despite the fact that yoga originated within a period of breaking out from under hegemonic Vedic traditions that sramanas strove to free themselves from, but we digress... thankfully). It's a legit question, whether what we're doing can even be called "yoga", not with an easy answer.

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 11:33am



**Amy Soska** Thanks for your response, [Asia Nelson](#). Of course we can call it whatever we want. I ask this question as I ask it of myself quite regularly. Even my most 'traditional' offerings where I stick to a standard asana pranayama meditation class would probably be deemed inauthentic by purists. Fortunately I have open minded students who appreciate the classes where I fuse elements of other movement practices. At one point I discussed changing the name of my class, to permit more freedom. It wasn't well received, people want to practice under the name of yoga. So I use that name, but often feel equally removed from both the modern yoga industry and the ancient yoga that apparently none of us know anything about anyway, according to the purists.

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 12:07pm



**Diane Bruni** Yes, great question. And I'll admit it's constant struggle. When I started yoga with Yoga Bahjan we looked into each others eyes and chanted. That was yoga. When I did Iyengar yoga we dissected knee caps and that was yoga. When I did Bikram I detoxified like a sweat lodge, that was yoga. When I did ashtanga I was doing gymnastics and that was yoga. When I did yoga with Ken Scott from Kripalu, the person who developed dance kinetics that was Yoga. What did all these practices have in common? I learned something about myself each time, they provided for me a container for self inquiry. We do not have to sit in lotus position to look inside and ask the question, Who am I? We can ask the question from many lenses. Who am I to say what is Yoga. Who are you to say what is Yoga? I'm following my intuition and heart feeling inside and believe there are many many people who are asking the same question.





**Jofrid Regitzesdatter** Thank you all for sharing you thoughts! i`m not only learning a lot here, but it has also challenged me to take a stance on an issue I`ve been struggling with for a long time. Even though I`m a certified yogainstructor (yes, sure, we can debate that certification another time, I`m sure somebody will want to) I`m not sure that I teach YOGA anymore. So I`ve changed my page to "movement instruction" and then I explain my inspiration from asana, strength training and the ideas of fluid, freeing movements. Honestly, that makes me feel more comfortable, but it does demand that I explain myself to potential and old student. but hey, I`m always doing that anyways 😊

Like · Reply · 👍 7 · May 18 at 12:31pm



**Bradd Graves** Diane Bruni With a line-up like that, It's totally possible that you were never doing yoga. 😊

Unlike · Reply · 👍 3 · May 18 at 1:31pm



Write a reply...



**Bradd Graves** One of my teachers had a simple rubric. If a class does not include meditation, it isn't yoga. The meditation referred to here would have the aim of removing avidya, which can be simply defined as the removal of ignorance regarding the nature of realit... [See More](#)



## Grand Funk Railroad - The Locomotion Lyrics

YOUTUBE.COM

Unlike · Reply · 👍 5 · May 18 at 10:11am



**Diane Bruni** Thanks, yes must get this song in the playlist!

Like · Reply · May 18 at 12:10pm



**Bradd Graves** And thank you! I'd totally forgotten about that song, which I still like just as I like the mindless but os-so-cute offerings of the Go-Gos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f55KIPe81Yw>



## The Go-Go's - We Got The Beat

YOUTUBE.COM

Like · Reply · May 18 at 1:33pm · Edited



**Bradd Graves** Also, reconnecting with that song gave me a concept for a video about the Kleshas. I'll post it here if I follow through on it.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 1:35pm



Write a reply...



**Kathryn Beet** Hi Brad The whole class was a meditation in motion. It ended with Savasana followed by a sitting meditation. When I saw your comment "Nia" last night, I looked at your website and saw that you teach something called Vyayam Yoga. The description of that is very similar to what I experienced in Diane's class last night. Perhaps you don't use music. She did. You have a specific pranayam focus.. hers differs. You use a couple of movement styles that she uses but there are also a few others in the class she is developing. I find the agitation around Diane's choice to include the word yoga in the work she is researching and creating, fascinating. What's up with that?

Like · Reply · 2 · May 18 at 10:27am



**Bradd Graves** Vyayam means exercise, Kathryn, and it can be done to music, though I find that distracting if it has a beat. I consider it training for more serious yoga practices. as I've discussed elsewhere



in this forum. You are correct that on the Home page of my website the word yoga appears after Vyayam and on several places in my website, though usually it is referred to simply as vyayam. A revision is planned, where I can make that more explicit and consistent. I enjoy Nia, but I am under no illusion that it is yoga, and that is not what they call it.

Like · Reply ·  1 · May 18 at 1:11pm



**Bradd Graves** Gymnastics also looks not just similar, but exactly like many yoga poses and even classes. They also do not call what they do yoga, for good reason. Your correlations, based on a cursory look at a website text, are of course without basis.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 1:22pm



**Bradd Graves** Personally, I'm not agitated, as my posts should make clear, but I do want to insist that the better teachers are clear about what they are teaching.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 1:24pm



**Bradd Graves** And of course, pilates mat is as close of a direct steal from yoga as you can get, yet they don't call it that, because they know its just exercise, not yoga.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:09pm



**Bradd Graves** Well, at least gymnasts, pilates, and Nia folks have some integrity. Sadly, many MPY folks do not.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:20pm



**Kathryn Beet** MPY? Bradd Graves what is that?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:27pm · Edited



Write a reply...



**Sri Louise** because these practices are situated in an understanding, that understanding is deemed yoga. it's clear you don't have that understanding Kathryn Beet and you should simply admit that. when we use the word yoga to describe what we do, is it important or relevant as westerners, to have an understanding of what that actually means? or it is enough to impute your own meaning and call it yoga?

Like · Reply ·  1 · May 18 at 10:34am



**Kathryn Beet** It seems to me, **Sri Louise**, that you are concerned about cultural appropriation. I respect this concern and I agree it has created so many problems. Yet I think we are missing the point when North American Yogi's attack one another regarding who's Yoga is REAL Yoga. Yoga is a philosophy and practice that was conceived of long ago, far away by MEN who lived in caves in a hot country. I'm a WOMAN, living in a mainly cold, (and capitalist), country in the 21st century. My PERSONAL aim is to make this practice and these teachings relevant to myself and others in a way that can be sustained and that might ease some of the tremendous suffering we all experience at this time in history. Diane's class last night achieved that goal in so many ways. For that, I applaud her. I also agree with her that it is a work in progress. It makes me sad to see a woman attempt to empower herself and get slammed down for doing so by anyone, let alone, by other women.

Like · Reply ·  1 · May 18 at 3:49pm



**Sri Louise** okay, but what are the teachings?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 3:53pm · Edited



**Kathryn Beet** I could talk about Avidya.. the seed of all suffering.. that seems relevant here. It's interesting.. when Diane began talking a few years ago about how Yoga was causing injuries etc, I was triggered. I wanted her to define Yoga.. as you do here today. Because my Yoga was not hurting me and I felt it was getting lumped into the category of Yoga she was dissing as long as she wasn't specific and definitive. I asked her to consider not hating on Yoga but instead to redefine it for herself. I went into the class last night with some apprehension. The practice was focused and gentle and consistent. It was delivered with such grace, love, sincerity and kindness. This practice she has created, it meets her need for small constant bouncy, flowing, undulating motion to support the flow of fluid through the lymph system. What is so exciting, beyond the fact that it has the potential to empower so many, is that specifically, it is a perfect practice for breast cancer survivors. So it is Diane's Yoga practice.. it was born out of seeking to meet a specific need and it achieved that purpose and so much more. From my limited understanding.. that's a Yog. Last night's class was a celebration of her achievement. This ongoing dialogue with you.. it does not feel



like yoga. It feels like judgement. It feels laced with ism's... us and them's. Give it up. Nobody here is trying to hurt you or take anything away from you. Live and let live.

Like · Reply ·  3 · May 18 at 5:49pm · Edited



Write a reply...



**Diane Bruni** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggGO4sjfYys>



Yoga Teacher Training for dancers / Sri Louise

YOUTUBE.COM

Like · Reply ·  1 · May 18 at 11:23am



**Kathryn Beet** Yoga Teacher Training for Dancers Sri Louise?...

"unless someone can say what specifically this has to do with yoga, i would ask that you don't use yoga in the title...just a thought"

Like · Reply ·  1 · May 18 at 11:47am



Write a reply...



**Diane Bruni** Sri Louise is this your yoga? I see some spirals and side bending and improvisation. It's beautiful. And it looks a lot like my practice. I'm not sure where you're coming from. If you were doing straight up linear yoga, I'd get your point, but it looks to me that have strayed very far from that approach yourself. Why are being so critical of us, when you're doing the exact same thing? I just don't understand.

Like · Reply ·  2 · May 18 at 11:28am · Edited



**Sri Louise** actually diane, i'm not doing the same thing. within it, students also study particular verses from the bhagavad gita, yoga sutra and glean the ontological vision of advaita vedanta. they also learn how to pronounce sanskrit alphabet, last year's students even learned to write it, they learn how to have an appreciation of the language and chanting should they choose to do that, because the whole thing is contextualized in a cultural vision, the vision of hinduism. is that what you mean when you say you and i are doing the same thing?

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 12:31pm · Edited



**Sri Louise** also what i do for asana class and what i do in an improvisational setting with dancers are often two very different things...and because of that we can easily discern between the utility of what we are practicing.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 12:38pm



**Kathryn Beet** Oh.. they study verses from the Gita and Yoga Sutra... they glean the ontological vision of advaita vedanta. They learn how to pronounce sanskrit alphabet and even learn to write it... it MUST be Yoga then. If you were a little less annoyed about others finding joy in their practice - whatever they want to call it... if you were not name calling and insulting people you know nothing about, it might not occur to me **Sri Louise**, that you are ignorant and angry for reasons of your own making. I see from your website that you also had a nasty scuffle with Cynthia Funk, who, from the looks of things, got dragged through the mud for months by your nonsensical banter. Lets leave well enough alone **Sri Louise**. You do your Yoga and we will do ours. Peace out!

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 12:48pm



**Maria Josephina Johanna Schilt** They learn all this in 50 hours?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 12:52pm



**Kathryn Beet** Can you imagine? She's a magician obviously.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 12:53pm



**Sri Louise** kathryn beet cynthia funk has yet to pay me for classes i taught a year ago. i can see you have similar ideas of yoga...and are as passive aggressive...

Like · Reply · May 18 at 3:44pm





**Erica Krauter** This was by far the best class i have done in a long time !!!  
Way to go girls!!! The energy was electric

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 12:34pm



**Diane Bruni** No, Sri Louise, I don't speak Sanskrit. I'd rather spend my time learning Spanish, seems more practical for my life. I'm just looking at this video promoting your YTT, this looks very reminiscent of what i do, asana wise. Which is why most people do yoga. They don't actually care about the texts and the language.

Like · Reply · 👍 5 · May 18 at 12:38pm · Edited



**Saraswati Sylvie Boisclair** Sad...that they don't care. There is so much in learning sanskrit. For some of us it is a loss not to care. Please respect different approaches ( I don't know if that word can be pluralized but I hope so 😊).

Like · Reply · May 18 at 3:52pm



**Diane Bruni** I would hope that yogies would be respectful of differences.

Like · Reply · Yesterday at 6:08am



Write a reply...



**Kristy Pisani** Awesome! Coming your workshop on the 30th! Can't wait!!!👍

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · May 18 at 12:43pm



**Sri Louise** diane, i'm sorry, the video is not really representational of what i do in class, it is a representation of how i move as a contemporary dancer, mixed in with asana...i know that most people who come to yoga don't care about language and text, are you using that as some kind of legitimate excuse to not care about them yourself? that is why i am critical and will re-ask the question. what does this have to do with yoga? what you are so adamant about in movement, i am adamant about in the philosophical identity of yoga. part of how you landed where you landed was because yoga for you meant the body...rather than fight me about this, you could educate yourself on what yoga really means and then decide whether it is relevant to include it in your teaching practice or not...

Like · Reply · 👍 3 · May 18 at 12:45pm



**Kathryn Beet** Educate us Sri. I say that in earnest. I feel that Diane has moved from a practice which, to say the least, was not serving her. But this practice she has created, it meets her need for small constant bouncy, flowing, undulating motion to support the flow of fluid through the lymph system. What is so exciting, beyond the fact that it has the potential to empower so many, is that specifically, it is a perfect practice for breast cancer survivors. So it is Diane's Yoga practice.. it was born out of seeking to meet a specific need and it achieved that purpose. From my limited understanding.. that's a Yog.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 5:34pm



**Sri Louise** Kathryn Beet how long have you been in yoga? at any point had you wanted to know, you could have easily educated yourself. i am not here to educate you. i'm asking relevant questions about appropriation, about calling something yoga when yoga is clearly not understood. techniques are for what? the path that we call yoga is for what purpose? both the path and the goal are referred to as yoga. i think it's great that what diane is doing empowers people, but my question remains, should what she's doing be called yoga and why? there are so many healing modalities, somatic and hands on that don't use the yoga label although some encroach upon that like BMC. there have always been pluralistic approaches to the same goal in india, which is moksa. i don't have a issue with diversity in approach, i have issue with the goal being nowhere in sight...you can claim this empty goal yoga as modern, but it's pretty shallow...as we see throughout the yoga industry with this yoga becky approach that says anything you do is yoga...

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 10:21pm



**Kathryn Beet** Sri Louise, I think it's fair to say that you and I disagree. One can pontificate about what Yoga is or is not until the cows come home. In the end, the proof is in the pudding. What I experienced last night, fits into my definition of Yoga. I'm sorry that this is triggering for you. It is not my intention to offend you. Have a good sleep.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:46pm



**Sri Louise** actually Kathryn Beet it seems much more triggering for you as i did not have to delete any comments today...

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:47pm · Edited





**Kathryn Beet** You edited as I did. When a comment has been edited, it shows underneath it. I edited, as did you.. now go to bed!

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:54pm



**Sri Louise** i edited a misspelled/misintended word...i didn't act out, have someone comment and tell me i acted out and then try to reign in my behavior, by deleting said comment.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 10:56pm



**Kathryn Beet** Yes. It's true. I edited out a comment about you being full of shit. You did not edit out any of your unfounded insults. Goodnight.

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 11:03pm



**Sri Louise** lol, no i don't have to insult anyone, **Kathryn Beet** you do a good enough job on your own...

Like · Reply · May 18 at 11:11pm



**Kathryn Beet** Yay! Yoga!

Like · Reply · May 18 at 11:14pm



Write a reply...



**Kathryn Beet** Sri Louise... The video is called YOGA TEACHER TRAINING FOR DANCERS.

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 1:04pm · Edited



**Brendan Jensen** Easy Kathryn Beet Sri Louise is being very critical and that can be challenging but she has also been respectful.

Like · Reply · 👍 3 · May 18 at 12:52pm · Edited



**Diane Bruni** Sri, honestly I don't get where you're coming from. Should the whole world stop calling what they teach yoga? I am not fighting you on anything, I admit i don't study yogic texts. I know about 2 people in my community that do study yogic texts and gues... [See More](#)

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 12:58pm · Edited



**Amy Soska** Kathryn Beet please don't shut down this very interesting debate by resorting to personal abuse. you may not find it valuable but others do.

Like · Reply · 👍 4 · May 18 at 1:00pm



**Diane Bruni** I think Kathryn Beet is frustrated. And that's OK too! We don't have to be nice all the time.

Like · Reply · 👍 4 · May 18 at 1:05pm



**Kathryn Beet** Amy Soska ... Thank you... I edited the insult out. Sometimes I like to debunk the spiritual bypassing in conversations like this by saying things like "You're full of shit" ... when it's true.. but you are right.. nothing positive will come of it. Thanks Diane.. hahahaha!

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · May 18 at 1:08pm



**Diane Bruni** Ok that's it, I'm going to undulate bounce and jiggle now.

Like · Reply · 👍 4 · May 18 at 1:14pm



**Amy Soska** Thank you, Kathryn Beet. i agree that its ok to feel how we feel, and that a straight insult is preferable to a passive aggressive sarcastic namaste. but i left other groups due to excessive name calling so im just hoping this group will stay civil 😊

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 1:14pm



**Kathryn Beet** Amy Soska good call.

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · May 18 at 1:15pm



**Sri Louise** i also don't think anyone needs to edit anything...i find these threads fascinating in what they reveal...



## Act II





**Maria Josephina Johanna Schilt** I really agree with Sri that Yoga is not only Motion or Asana... I think from what I know of traditions that the teacher gives the student exactly what is needed to overcome obstacles to freedom, be it asana, scriptures, mantra or selfless service...

I had a teacher from Kashmir who said to me 'you dont need to do any of these asana's', this was in a Sivananda ashram where he happened to be also... So instead of all the crazy breathing and asana and karma yoga , he asked me to read my poetry to him and recited his poems to me..... Was this not Yoga?

Like · Reply · 2 · May 18 at 1:01pm



**Diane Bruni** I think Sri would that's not yoga because you were not studying yogic texts. Maybe this guru had a crush on you?

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 1:07pm



**Maria Josephina Johanna Schilt** He would never call himself a Guru, he was yes at my feet , him being a young man and I in my sixties.... He was only sane person I met there and he never practiced asana himself.... He gave me some profound lessons reveled in no scripture , only written in the dept of soul

Like · Reply · May 18 at 1:25pm



**Maria Josephina Johanna Schilt** I dear Diane , think that poetry inside or outside love or teacher student relationship can be a way to realisation, yoga, samadhi , ' what's in the name' ?

As I have like you Diane and Sri Louise, have a body , we have to deal with it... As a poet I love the scriptures, did you ever read the High Song of Salomo in the old testament... Just as beautifull as the Upanishads or the Bagavad Gita or Patanjali...

I hate asana.... I had to drag my body to class, but it worked and brought me to overcome some hindrances...

I love the teachings of The Buddha the greatest Yogi of all... But Sri::: please be kind with all your knowlegde and educate in stead of accuse or out yourself above others...

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 1:36pm





**Saraswati Sylvie Boisclair** All the "crazy" breathing has helped a lot of people who needed exactly that. It's one part of yoga and some people really benefit from it. I don't feel that Sri is confrontationAL. I sense more yoga philosophy reluctance from some participants in this discussion. I don't understand why this desire to consider not being interested in yoga philosophy better.

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 11:17pm · Edited



**Maria Josephina Johanna Schilt** The 'crazy' breathing and exhaustion made me very sick ( the teachers provided no help, nor doctor) I ended up in a 'hospitaal' in India for 8 weeks... But that's a different story.. The real Yoga began there I can tell you... Back on my feet I found a good teacher in asana pranayama and filosofy . not in India but in Amsterdam where I was seen... And this Powerfull practices where thought to me in a carefull way...I agree with Sri and Saraswati ( who gave you both the beautifull names?) that you cannot call your practice yoga if you are not interested in its origine and filosofy. On the other hand we all as modern yogi's are part of this evolving science and practice.....


Befor AyurvedaYogaTantra came into my life I was initiated in other Western wisdom and mystery traditions.... So for me THE timeless wisdoms are not exclusively Hindu for me.... I study Sanscrit but shal never have the time of life as a 65 year old lady to really master it, or pronounce it correctly... For me to be in THE company of wisdom is strengthening...

Like · Reply · Yesterday at 1:17am




**Diane Bruni** Saraswati Sylvie Boisclair, thanks for your comments. I wouldn't say i have any reluctance at all to the study of Yoga Philosophy, my library is full of yoga philosophy books. Its all i read for about 15 years straight. I am at a point in my life, where it's not about the books, it's about the integration of all I have learned and continue to learn into my daily life. I would not consider myself very knowledgeable on the subject of yoga philosophy, nothing compared to someone like [Sri Louise](#). I am very interested in the history of yoga, I have read a couple of books lately on this subject that i find very interesting. In fact it's a main subject in my YTT program, i don't teach it, I hire someone who teaches yoga history at Queens University to teach that segment of my program. About the crazy breathing...I don't know what [Maria Josephina Johanna Schilt](#) is referring to, maybe

she could elaborate, but some of the pranayam exercises could take someone who is already in a sympathetic hyper aroused state into an asthma attack. I don't think yoga teachers have enough information about this, but that's a whole other story. There is a long thread on this page that was facilitated by [Stephen Donald](#) and the Buteyko breathing method. I see you teach Budokon Yoga a form of martial arts and dance. Sri Louise would say that not cool, that you should consider not using the name yoga to teach something that does not look like yoga. What would you say to that? These are very difficult questions...we are all facing right now. Thanks for your insights and the discussion. Diane

Like · Reply ·  3 · Yesterday at 5:56am



**Stephen Donald** Interesting discussion. Defining Yoga is way over my head but I do know a few things about breathing. Any breathing that anyone is doing that can be described as 'crazy' is best avoided. Manipulating the breath is far more powerful than most realize. Your body will take the air it needs. Over-riding this is and doing otherwise can lead to unintended consequences. Ten years ago I learned the Buteyko method. I no longer have asthma, snore, have ragweed allergies, blocked eustachian tube, when I become unwell, like a cold, I get better very quickly. There is tremendous healing potential in the breath. "The perfect person breathes as though they are not breathing" - Lao Tzu

Like · Reply ·  2 · Yesterday at 7:11am



Write a reply...



**Brendan Jensen** Sri Louise question is valid and deserves reflection. It is challenging to the core when considered. This forum is a very difficult place to have an effective dialogue. What is so great about being right or correct? Let's live these questions and let them effect us.

Like · Reply ·  12 · May 18 at 1:10pm · Edited





**Saraswati Sylvie Boisciair** I thank you. No right or wrong but an ongoing discussion. We all come with baggage.

Like · Reply · 1 · May 18 at 3:00pm



Write a reply...



**Maria Josephina Johanna Schilt** I appreciate this group very much Diane! I read all posts and it educates me a lot, because I practice And teach asana and pranayama and meditation....

Like · Reply · May 18 at 1:04pm



**Brendan Jensen** I too appreciate this group. It is absolutely fascinating !!!! Thank you Diane Bruni

Like · Reply · 3 · May 18 at 1:07pm · Edited



**Brendan Jensen** Thanks Sri Louise for waking things up!

Unlike · Reply · 5 · May 18 at 1:16pm



**Diana Thielen** I also do appreciate this discussion, and at the same time it is challenging. at several levels: I agree with Sri, that moving within a form, is at the same page as moving "without" a form. And even if I appreciate the physical focus of this group (since this is my main focus and my field of research so far) I do think there is a missing link: this group is reconstructing the asanas, but not contextualizing the hindu background of yoga. And I am calling myself out as well. So as we are reconstructing the asanas, modifying it and finding ease it, we call it constantly yoga and mention that our life is our teacher. Our experience, our children...I do think that is very ignorant. It is a pattern which white folks can do, reclaiming diverse cultural heritage and re-construct it without reflecting it. That is one facet I think about a lot, The other one is, that I do sense also a name-dropping. So suddenly there was a video posted of a dance class, using some yoga-positions in a sequence through space, and people comment: like axis syllabus! And there I do wonder, since I haven't recognize any embodied principles/founding of the AS in that video ( but I need to commit, everyone could study the Axis Syllabus, but it was not visible for me in the movements...yet) if this is a similar mechanism or understanding which is part of that: finding something new, naming it, labeling it, creating classes, promoting us...this is very much what our neo-liberal society is expecting of us: to feed the market. And yes, as Sri was calling us out: Again, we are focusing on the body.

Unlike · Reply · 8 · May 18 at 2:32pm





**Jofrid Regitzesdatter** I like your thinking! The way we describe our practice can open doors for some students and close them to others, it can feed a market mechanism or remove itself from it. Very important point you're making here!

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 10:58pm



**Diane Bruni** Diana Thielen thank you for your thoughtful response. Sri Louise, you and I have much in common. We have been influenced by the Axis Syllabus Movement Research community. Our yoga asana practices are a reflection of that association. I was drawn to AS because of my injuries and all the injuries that were happening all around me. After 6 years of study with AS I am wishing to share with the yoga community what I've learned. Frey Faust the founder of the AS encourages that we take the information about healthy movement into our worlds. This is my intention to help share with yoga community a new perspective on how static linear poses can be practiced with a little more flow, with attention to the water aspect of the body as opposed to the muscular. Energy and information are transmitted through the waters of the body, opening up the flow of this water, opens energy flow and puts less strain on the joints. I know you know this, just for other readers who might not know where I'm coming from. My main teacher **Ruth Douthwright** has been a huge influence on me, I practice with her every week. I am finally beginning to feel a sense of this fluidity in my body. People come to yoga because they want to flow...the AS is all about flow. Learning how to teach people how to really connect with the inner flow is what interests me today. I am less interested in the outer form of poses and feel like the poses are more like pauses within a continuum of internal flow. To me, this is yoga, it's what I have practiced for 35 years, I do not feel I am leaving yoga, I feel like I am going deeper into what is yoga? Which is a question. I do not have an answer after all these years, I'm still not sure, and I'm ok with that. I mentioned in another comment that my children are my teachers, I think you commented something like that is ignorant. Please let me elaborate. My children are significant relationships in my life, all relationships are my teachers. Relationships reflect back to us who we are, our struggles, our triggers, our compassion. Relationships more than anything bring us back to reality, back to the present moment. Yoga is happening now. In our relationships in our daily life. My children, my parents, my significant other, my neighbor, my friends, my yoga

community, my ancestors all these relationships are happening in the here and now, they are opportunities to learn about ourselves and opportunities to practice compassion, maybe I'm more of Buddhist than a yogi...but wasn't the Buddha a yogi? Or was he banished from the community for being too kind?

Like · Reply ·  2 · Yesterday at 6:41am




**Asia Nelson** "The success of Yoga does not lie in the ability to perform postures but in how it positively changes the way we live our life and our relationships."

— T.K.V. Desikachar

Like · Reply · Yesterday at 7:24am



**Diana Thielen** Diane Bruni I am with you and I indeed share a similar journey. But I do still feel a conflict, in my understanding that was also part of Sri Louise' critique, which could be manifested in our analytical/objectivizing thinking: the union of body and mind; in our case using the movements for empowerment (belong other wishes and desired and needs) is nevertheless focusing on our body. and isn't yoga about liberation? so what is the next step after re-constructing the asanas? and again, I am far away of having the answers. But the initiated Q : " what does it have to do with yoga?" was in my understanding beyond the bio-mechanical aspect.

Unlike · Reply ·  4 · Yesterday at 7:56am





**Sri Louise** Diane Bruni i will respond at length later when i have some time...

Like · Reply · May 18 at 3:47pm



**Saraswati Sylvie Boisclair** Why the capital letters?

Like · Reply · May 18 at 3:53pm



**Saraswati Sylvie Boisclair** Broken relationships as a deterrent to learning about sacred text? As if they were poison? That's not cool.

Unlike · Reply · 👍 1 · May 18 at 3:55pm



**Diane Bruni** I never said they were poison. In fact I think relationships are yoga, doesn't matter good or bad, hard or easy all our relationships are yoga. Relationships are the stuff of daily life, this is exactly what I feel is yoga. Any situation and containe... [See More](#)

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · May 18 at 4:16pm



**Saraswati Sylvie Boisclair** For me it's not about more or less evolved. I have met "evolved never studied any scriptures" humans and "evolved has studied scriptures humans" one doesn't exclude the other. I was just reacting to what I read as a form of judgement towards people who study the scriptures as those who struggle having and keeping fulfilling relationships. I just didn't understand that statement. Scriptures for some of us are a source of ongoing inspiration. Now, does that make me better or worse off than someone else? I have no clue. 😊 some people are not interested in scripture and that's fine especially since most yoga classes nowadays have eradicated any trace of Scripture whatsoever from their classes. I think it might reflect the lack of interest for them and our obsession with this finite/limited part of our being we call our physical body.

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 7:34pm · Edited



Write a reply...







**Shana Sandler** I admittedly have no patience, wherewithal or expertise to chime in on the "What is Yoga" "Can we call ~this/that~ Yoga?" question. I do however appreciate those like **Diane Bruni** and **Kathryn Beet** and others in this group who are passionately and articulately contributing to this discussion. I'm participating in this class because it's not the typical yoga to be found in the studio setting. I'm participating because I want a space to experiment and breathe new life into my practice and teaching. I'm taking this class because of Diane's statement last night: "I don't want to teach people poses. I want to teach people how to move." I don't really care what it's called. Maybe it's not Yoga anymore. I honestly don't know. Here's what I experienced: A beautifully focused and meditative state that was deeply personal and supported by the collective. I experienced a refreshing light heartedness that was freeing. I experienced a springy, pulsating, more alive spongy (for lack of a better term!) sensation in my body. Strong, yet yielding. I experienced a longing for what I was used to: the safety of more specific cues and direction. I was able to sink into more of an intuitive mode, when in typical yoga classes I'd be furrowing my brow, trying to get it right. Observing, experimenting and being more open and forgiving of myself. I experienced the notion of moving familiar poses in a new way, like taking a lunge through space across the room. I experienced a place where I could more openly say "I don't know". A private struggle that's now being held with others.

Like · Reply · 6 · May 18 at 12:51pm



**Svea Sauerborn** "I experienced a longing for what I was used to: the safety of more specific cues and direction. I was able to sink into more of an intuitive mode, when in typical yoga classes I'd be furrowing my brow, trying to get it right. Observing, experimenting and being more open and forgiving of myself. I experienced the notion of moving familiar poses in a new way." that's what I recently experienced in my practice as well, and it gets easier and easier to drop into an intuitive mode 😊

Like · Reply · 2 · May 18 at 1:06pm



**Diane Bruni** thanks for sharing this **Svea Sauerborn**

Like · Reply · May 18 at 4:18pm



Write a reply...



**Diane Bruni** Thanks Shana.

Like · Reply · May 18 at 1:00pm



**Diana Thielen** I use the Q for reflecting. And noticing habits of :-" yes, this is indeed my pattern! I do identify myself by the physical appearance. It does feel great, I do sense the flow and the energy and the power. I do need to move actually to feel who I am. (ok. I might be also a bit extreme;)) But: What is the liberation in yoga about? My personal thought (correct me if I'm wrong) that it's BEYOND our physical structure...

Like · Reply · 2 · Yesterday at 8:01 am



**Brendan Jensen** Thank you **Diana Thielen** for re-articulating **Sri Louise** original question. This is not a critique of the physical practices people are exploring. This is the question of 'how is it yoga?'. While I believe there is potential for awakening and insight in every moment I would hesitate to call everything I get up to Yoga. Being mindful is a noble practice but does not automatically become Yoga! **Sri Louise** is simply reminding us that Yoga has an origin, culture and history that comes with it. Yoga is deeply scientific and demanding in its approach towards freedom. Sri Louise has revealed the privilege of our western approach and its vulnerability. Instead of trying to defend our personal ideas of what feels good or yogic we can enter into this uncomfortable dialogue about what yoga is. At this point it is up to all of us to decide what we call our practice but I encourage us all to stay curious and open to the questions being posed regardless of how difficult they are and how uncomfortable they might make us feel.

Unlike · Reply · 6 · Yesterday at 9:17 am





**Sri Louise** water is an interesting metaphor here, because it can also be used to describe the watering down process of yoga in the west... a guru, teacher, is someone who removes your self-ignorance. to say that everyone is your teacher i.e. and that everything is yoga is to completely dismiss the meaning and identity of both the guru and yoga. **Kathryn Beet** will make comments about not needing a guru, "it pays no homage to guru" a sentiment echoed by a lot of westerners, who then have to agree that they learn through relationships, a teacher, and so then everyone becomes the teacher, but no one is the guru.

i suppose in that way we could say everyone is our therapist, but we don't say that? why don't we say that? i think it is important to recognize that most of us in yoga, who teach yoga and have yoga studios really have no clue what it is. we have not studied with qualified teachers and so after our statements that everything is yoga & i learn about my self through all my relations, we don't know what it is. i'm not sure why that doesn't trouble people more. i can only attribute it to a larger settler/colonial mentality that sees the world and the sacred objects in it as theirs to do whatever they want with.


i understand that your focus has changed and i appreciate why, but the question remains, what is it that makes what i/we do yoga? if i conflate yoga with dance or teacher with children, i lose the profound ability that yoga has traditionally presented, which is to know the true nature of myself. the problem is, most people in yoga didn't come to it asking that question, but there is such a thing as a mumukshu, the one desirous of liberation and there is also an adhikari, the one qualified for the teaching...when yoga is reduced to self help or co-opted by the wellness community it loses it's ontological relevance, which is what makes yoga, yoga.

you cannot make a billion dollar industry off yoga, off of simply asking and answering, who am i, but you can make a billion dollar industry around the body and hence the popularity of yoga in the west...i also think there is so much value in what has happened in the west and if that were incorporated into the larger fold of yoga, we could have a really powerful process for self-knowledge...but mostly what i see are empty promises of freedom, call it fluid, or happy...it's all time bound, like the body. i have more respect for those who just say, i don't know then for those who try to fill the gaps with their own logic...

when the word avidya/ignorance is used in yoga it is not used as a synonym for you are stupid. avidya is part of the manifestation and yoga is the process of removing this avidya. you either know the nature of yourself or you don't. there are many "schools of thought" in india. i'm from the traditional vedanta perspective. non-dual doesn't mean we come into a room and hold hands and call our sense of connection oneness. non-dual is recognizing that if there is only one thing here, it cannot be beyond me, but has to be me. if it is me, how so. because what i call me, the body/mind/sense complex i know is coming to an end...i know it is time bound. is there something about my self experience that is non-ending? is that non-ending self the same or different than the ending parts i take to be myself. what is the relationship of that non-ending self to the world of forms outside my own body/mind/sense? what is the relationship of this non-ending self to god?

we have reduced yoga to something that doesn't ask any of these questions...i'm all for fitness, but i don't mistake it for yoga. i'm all for dance, but i don't mistake it for yoga. i'm all for fusion, but i just wouldn't call it yoga and if you do call it yoga, then you should be accountable for how and why you do that.

the yoga fragility that comes up every time someone pushes back on this reduction of yoga, which mirrors white fragility, coined by robin diangelo, is something that should really startle everyone in this group, which brings me back to the defense of the settler/colonial dynamic.

Like · Reply ·  9 · Yesterday at 9:18am



**Deborah Whipple** very well said Sri.

1 Like · Reply ·  2 · Yesterday at 11:20am





**Diana Thielen** I appreciate that a lot Sri Louise. It is very supportive and at the same time also challenging, but I do take those question's into my/the process and I feel gratitude that you took the time for elaborating it.

Unlike · Reply · 👍 4 · Yesterday at 11:36am



**Brendan Jensen** Thank you Sri Louise.

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · Yesterday at 11:53am



**Diane Bruni** Do you have guru Sri Louise. Do you think that having a guru is a prerequisite for the study and practice of yoga?

Like · Reply · 21 hrs



**Sri Louise** yes, i have a guru. actually i have several as my guru has taught many disciples, who are now sannyasis and carry the tradition in his physical absence. the question is Diane Bruni how are you going to know what you don't know without a teacher?

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · 20 hrs



**Sri Louise** i should specify, my guru is a teacher of advaita vedanta and sanskrit, not asana.

Like · Reply · 👍 1 · 20 hrs



**Cecilia Wong** Well put Sri Louise. It is not up to us to "redefine" yoga, I think. Find new ways to move is one thing, but yoga is not ours to change. These are the kinds of questions that keep me up at night, wondering where I'm going. Do I have the right to call what I'm teaching and practicing "yoga"? The answer is not obvious.

Unlike · Reply · 👍 2 · 15 hrs



**Diane Bruni** Sri Louise, what are your guru's names? maybe I would like your guru? It's not that i haven't looked, but it seems to me that most gurus are corrupt, take advantage and abuse people. Maybe the group could benefit from knowing more about your gurus? do they (and you) belong to certain sect? what is it? how can I learn more? I have not given up on gurus, don't get me wrong. If I could find a guru who was not abusive of their powers I might be interested. All the yoga asana gurus have turned out to be big disappointments. Maybe that's because they were focused on the body, people like Iyengar? Pattabi Jois, Desikachar's son, Amrit Desi, Yogi Bajan, and list goes on and on. Maybe these gurus needed gurus themselves. Its no wonder westerners have lost faith in the possibility of finding a guru who could actually teach them something other than how to be abusive, cause injury, and take their money. But I have not given up. Please share the group more details about your enlightened guru. So curious to know more, maybe there's still hope me. Do you go see your gurus? Where do they live? Do they have ashrams? How did you find your guru? How long have you been with your guru? I'm excited maybe I can be a follower again. I miss the feeling of being guided. i want someone to dispel the darkness. Please tell us who are these gurus?

Like · Reply · 1 · 12 hrs · Edited



**Sri Louise** Diane Bruni is this a serious question? i read your post with half sincerity and half sarcasm...also what is it that you are looking to know? it's not about finding someone for the sake of saying you have a guru...it's about asking certain questions. it's about pursuing a certain line of inquiry. it is said when that happens, the teacher will find you...

Like · Reply · 2 · 12 hrs



**Diane Bruni** Sri Louise, I am serious I would like to learn more about your gurus. I have been searching a long time.

Like · Reply · 1 · 12 hrs





**Sri Louise** Diane Bruni there is something about the way you phrase your question that leaves me really suspect. also i have never in the time that i have known you had the sense that you were looking for any kind of hindu teaching...mainly what you post is a dissent from yoga, not a re-investigation into what it might mean. my teacher is listed in all my biographies pertaining to yoga. it's not that i'm not public about the tradition i belong to, but i'm not proselytizing and i also don't share that information like a sales pitch with people who i don't think are asking the types of questions that would lead them to resonate with the teaching.

Like · Reply · 1 · 5 hrs · Edited



**Diane Bruni** Sri Louise I had a look at your guru's web site and some articles, Hindu nationalism is not my cup tea. I understand now more about your extreme sensitivity towards cultural appropriation, that was your teachers main mission statement. And that's very important and has got me thinking a whole lot more about this whole subject. I thank you for that. But, you're doing the exact same thing you're against. No one should be teaching Yoga, it's all being appropriated. What sets you apart from us? I see you're teaching a 50hr YTT training for dancers. How is that OK? And what the rest of are doing is not OK? Is it OK because you have a Guru and we don't? is that your point in all of this? We all need gurus to be authentic yogies? And isn't teaching the Gita just more of the same cultural appropriation that you're so against. Does teaching a few hours of yoga philosophy make teaching yoga asana OK? Is that how you're distinguishing your self from me and most other people who do yoga? The vibe I get from you is that you know more about Yoga



more about the yoga they talk about in the text books, I know you do and I respect that. My yoga is happening moment to moment living the life of a simple householder.

Like · Reply ·  1 · 2 hrs · Edited



**Sri Louise** diane, i get your yoga...that's what this whole conversation is about. i teach a 50 hour teacher training course, because i don't want people to study with me for a credential that they then rush off to yoga alliance to legitimate their practice with. 200 hours is just as arbitrary as my 50, but one fits the industry model and one doesn't. as you know, in terms of the dance movement you are now teaching without any credential outside of your yoga, you are perhaps better situated to understand the history of dance pedagogy. people studied and then they taught...as dancers, we don't have teacher trainings. frey is changing that, but ask frey, who he got his teaching certificate from? it will be interesting to see where that goes and how that shifts the teaching paradigm in contemporary dance. i work with dancers and they are free to do what they want with the information i give them...i'm really confident that my 50 hours is worth more than most 200, so i'm not in conflict here.

i had this conversation a couple of years ago with remski, he didn't fair well. you can watch it on youtube. you can guru bash and participate in hinduphobia. in fact, most of the yoga people i meet in the west, in spite of all their claims to love yoga, are deeply hinduphobic and out-right anti-hindu. diane perhaps you don't understand what cultural appropriation is. i'm wondering if you have done any work on your position as a white woman, as a settler/colonialist? it is not appropriation to teach what my teacher has taught me.

don't kill the messenger [Diane Bruni](#)...as i have also said to [Kathryn Beet](#), if at any time in the last 20 years either one of you really cared, you would know more about yoga than you do. you don't have a choice, but to make yoga a moment to moment thing, it's by default, you don't know what else it could or might be. you have made that really clear here. we all reveal ourselves...you can get mad at me, but really i'm not the problem...your yoga is limited by your own understanding and you're the only one that can solve that, because that problem will remain long after i stop commenting about it.

and maybe you will find, when you are honest, that what you do, what you seek, what gives you the deepest sense of self is not yoga and then you can change the name of what you do to reflect your newfound understanding that you are really deeply averse to yoga...

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhvkV\\_ac7OU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhvkV_ac7OU)



## Lost in Translation or The Looting of Yoga

YOUTUBE.COM





**Allise Rhode** Sounds like you had a wonderful time setting aside time to do something you don't do ~~~ habitually, Breath and movement done with intention and focus. The very definition of real yoga --as presented to me -- from the yoga lineage I am a part of. Kudos to you for that time of breathing, moving, with self-study and reflection. And the good vibe of friends to share with, and to help each other. This is the real deal. Yoga. I don't care if you just go for a walk. If you feel it's your yoga practice, then in fact, it IS.

Like · Reply · 👍 2 · May 18 at 5:47pm



**Jaime Verk Pérez** Wish I could have been there last night. Sounds like it was a very rewarding experience. Also, this thread was the most exciting part of my day. Thank you all for sharing your energy, insight and passion. 🙏🙏❤️

Like · Reply · 👍 3 · May 18 at 9:52pm



**Jofrid Regitzesdatter** As I wrote somewhere above, I've changed the name of my practice to movement instruction because, as much as I love many of the movements of classical yoga, as much as I dig the idea of meditating with the body or striving for samadhi thorough movement -> meditation I actually don't want to embrace the entire legacy or philosophy of yoga. But I also don't want to appropriate another culture or offend anybody by just going along and ignoring what I don't like. So now I'm working through the challenge of incorporating the elements I love and being respectful towards where they come from without claiming ownership of a philosophy that I really don't want to own.

Unlike · Reply · 👍 13 · May 18 at 11:03pm



**Allise Rhode** You can't own Yoga Jofrid. No one can. No matter their Nationalistic bent.. No need to strive for some end- yoga- result either. I'm glad you've come to see that the way humans label stuff and get all up into this or that, is like wind passing, clouds scudding. Enjoy your journey, embrace your own philosophy, as it changes and permutes over the course of your life.

Like · Reply · 👍 4 · Yesterday at 5:20pm





**Joanna Johnson** i posted this yesterday as part of a similar discussion on Sri Louise's page; just sharing in order to potentially expand the conversation out in this group:

i think the point that "there is a difference between not having a guru and suggesting that one doesn't need a guru" [made by Sri L] is really insightful and salient. it's my observation that most westerners are so damaged, lacking in mutually supportive relationship with ourselves and with community, that most of us don't wouldn't know what to do with a "real" guru. we're ripe for exploitation by charlatans, and/or running away from and reacting against authority, such that we don't know how to position ourselves in relation to teachers or teachings. hence, an over-abundance of humility, or (far more common) a huge arrogance. we also have a very strange, skewed and, again, damaged relationship with our bodies (and nature - not a coincidence that that these two things feed each other). so i think that a lot of what we call yoga here in the west is just the groundwork to enable us to get to a place that is assumed by eastern culture. an amount of us will get de-railed by that, perhaps. and some will go on to something more deep and satisfying (and perhaps "traditional").

... and i'll add for the purposes of this group that i'm not, personally, making value judgements here. as in, i use the word "derailed" above; but for some of us that might be perfectly valid - and healthy.

Unlike · Reply · 8 · 15 hrs



**Kathryn Beet** Sri Louise posed an important question two days ago that would have been wonderful to explore in an open, non-judgemental space... but it never really got answered. Sure, people liked this comment and that.. as though to cheer on one or the other of the two developing camps but other than attacks and counter attacks, few people weighed in on the essential question.. "What is Yoga"?.. perhaps for fear of the ensuing wrath? This group has a huge membership which seems to be developing into two camps.. The Feelers and The Thinkers. Neither camp has any patience or respect for the other. The Feelers say.. You think too much.. and The Thinkers say.. Educate yourself fool! The question is.. how can we re-establish this forum as a space for open, receptive communication.. a meeting ground in which we listen to one another and allow ourselves to be informed by one another? A huge achievement of **Diane Bruni's** Yoga and Movement research Group class on Tuesday night was that everyone felt safe and accepted. The receptivity and lack of judgement was palpable. This is, sadly, not the direction and vibe the



conversation of this group has taken since that post. I take responsibility and apologize for the part I played in that. We all have thoughts and idea's that are valid and worthy of a listen. Lets agree to maintain this space as one where all feel safe to contribute? ..."Out beyond ideas of wrong doing and right doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there"?

Like · Reply ·  10 · 6 hrs · Edited



**Diane Bruni** This is very insightful [Kathryn Beet](#), the 'feelers' and the 'thinkers'. I know where I fall in the spectrum!

Like · Reply · 2 hrs



**Brendan Jensen** Thanks for your response [Kathryn Beet](#). I disagree that this dialogue has factions of thinkers and feelers. I believe everyone participating is both a thinker and a feeler. The difficulty with an online dialogue is it lacks the human signalling and empathetic cues. This can leave the written word and the 'like' button open to misinterpretations in tone and intention. [Sri Louise](#) question, while very simple, seemed to be misinterpreted as an attack on Diane Bruni. The ensuing conversation was an effort to sort out this misinterpretation and any other confusion that may have arisen. Creating clarity is difficult and messy and requires time but I believe it is worth the effort. Thank you for owning your part in the dialogue and for expressing your desire to keep this space open and safe for us all. I believe this forum is functioning as well as it can. We are all stewards of this process. I am still very interested in the question 'how is what we do yoga?' as well.

Like · Reply ·  3 · 2 hrs · Edited



**Diane Bruni** You're right Brenden, I feel like we're all a bit of everything, but i do believe there is a spectrum, we're not all processing and integrating in the same ways. I notice my brother's name in your comment, was that a mistake or did I miss something? As always **Brendan Jensen** your insights are so helpful.

Like · Reply · 2 hrs · Edited



**Brendan Jensen** Thanks Diane Bruni. Your brothers name popped in by mistake! I think I fixed it.


Like · Reply · 23 mins



Write a reply...



**Joanna Johnson** thanks for this nuance, Brendan Jensen. whilst i personally feel that i need to re-educate myself to feel, and to trust that process and my feeling senses (which is not the same as "if it feels good it is good" and vice versa), i feel certain that thinking and feeling are equally important parts of being human, and that they can reinforce each other in a mutually supportive feedback loop.

Like · Reply ·  1 · 2 hrs





**Allise Rhode** I think some of the members may need to de-locate and re-locate. I honestly think this blog is a target of proselytizing Hindu zealots. I dip over to see what Sri Louise is up to on her many FB pages and websites, and often there I find offensive 'calling out' of deeply engaged yoga practitioners. Or an insistence on a specific way of thinking and or feeling --as necessary-- to be 'real' yoga. For example: being an adherent to a specific understanding of Advaita Vedanta. Now there is "yoga fragility" to be juiced. -----I think it would be refreshing to just see a --move on-- for these kinds of 'battles' [between what the Hindutva Crowd calls mistaken and ignorant 'materialists' and then their own identification with a preening superior world view].----- No fragility over here. Just hoping for healthy boundaries and an end to the preaching and manipulation. Asking innocent questions? Come on. It's manipulation and proselytizing of the worst sort. Complete with blog spamming.

Like · Reply · 4 · 6 hrs



**Sri Louise** Allise Rhode and everyone who liked her comment, your deep seated hinduphobia is really alarming. why do you conflate hindu/hinduism with hindutva? and by hindutva i don't mean that which has hinduness, which is what the word means, but why do conflate hindus with a right wing national party and does any one of you have even a rudimentary understanding of the colonial/political landscape of india? uhm, say something that would include the last 1000 years of political turmoil. is every christian in this group a fanatic? who would ever dare say such a thing? no one in this group would ever make such a statement against christians or jews speaking on the scriptural treatise of either of those religions...even though they have right wing parties and do tremendously fucked up shit on the planet. so Allise, why don't you enliven the conversation with what exactly your world view is?

Like · Reply · 19 mins



**Sri Louise** Diane Bruni take note.

Like · Reply · 40 mins




**Jennifer Anderson** Diane Bruni's joyful and effusive post about her ecstatic yoga/dance/movement class has been thoroughly highjacked. The 'what is yoga?' question can never be satisfactorily answered, as we each have our own individual, educated, and subjective response.

This group is about yoga and movement research. There are plenty of other platforms to expound on yogic history and lineage. Let's get back on point - - - well done Diane, on your yoga and movement explorations in this new format. That's a class I'd like to take.



**Jofrid Regitzesdatter** I feel that the issues raised in the thread are pertinent for the group. But I too would like to see the people who wish to discuss or critique an issue start a thread of their own. This way they can take responsibility for outlining the discussion, and define their specific concerns or criticism. When a few people take the position of just asking polemic questions without having to define the scope of the discussion, a lot of confusion arises, and posts are indeed highjacked.

Like · Reply ·  2 · 8 hrs





**Sri Louise** oh that's convenient Jennifer...i hope after the racist rant by Allise Rhode all the women feel safe in this group...#yogabecky

Like · Reply · 2 · 10 hrs · Edited



**Diane Bruni** Sri Louise if you'd like to start a new post and see what people in this group about Hindus go for it. This thread is done.

Like · Reply · 2 · 2 hrs



**Diane Bruni** I'm done, of course anyone can comment.

Like · Reply · 2 hrs



**Sri Louise** like i said, you are deeply to averse to yoga, own that diane, because i have screen shot this entire conversation.

Like · Reply · Just now

At this point I was removed from the group and the thread was deleted.



Public Group

Discussion

Members

Events

Photos

Files



Write Post



Add Photo / Video



Create Poll



More



Write something...



**Sri Louise**

Just now

lol, i'm back yoga beekys!!!!



Like



Comment



Share



**Sri Louise** but in all seriousness, people in this group should be really alarmed and upset that a thread that had been commented on for 2 days was deleted by the admins...i was also removed from the group...but no one who exhibited racist, anti-hindu sentiments was removed.

here's a good resource for those who cannot handle racial discomfort, white fragility by robin diangelo.

<http://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/viewFile/249/116>

Like · Reply · Just now



**Sri Louise** also, Allise Rhode your obsession with me is a bit much, I'm starting to think you have a crush on me.

Like · Reply · Just now

## Epilogue

*Diane Bruni*

*ya, bullies, just tiring to figure out how to block this bully, she found her way into the group again overnight. So weird.*

*Like · Reply · 1 · 1 hr*

*Kristy Goss*



*Kristy Goss change the setting to “any member can add people but must be approved by an admin” or something like that from the settings menu. By looking at that persons fb page I could see there was at least one other member from here cheering her on as she carried it on outside of the group. it was probably that person who added her back.*

*Like · Reply · 2 · 1 hr*

*Diane Bruni*

*Diane Bruni Kristy Goss Oh? really, so you think her friend brought her back into the group, How sneaky.*

*Like · Reply · 1 · 52 mins*

*Diane Bruni*

*Diane Bruni I know who that friend is, hummm? should i say something? no. waste of time.*

*Like · Reply · 1 · 50 mins*

The person who re-added me is not who Diane or Kristy think, but it's interesting to watch their social paranoia, a kind of Yoga Macartheism...how to root out everyone with dissenting views, even though Diane Bruni founded her group on dissent.

This Hinduphobic dynamic in the Yoga world that conflates any traditional understanding of Yoga with the right wing Hindutva agenda, is participating in a very dangerous dynamic. It has become the buzz word to shut down any accountability for understanding Yoga from its own standpoint. This has very serious consequences.